

Secondhand Tobacco Smoke

Secondhand smoke is a mixture of more than 4,000 chemicals, including carbon monoxide, nicotine, tars, formaldehyde, and hydrogen cyanide. Children who live with smokers involuntarily inhale many pollutants in smoke and several of these chemicals cause cancer and lung damage. Children exposed to secondhand smoke tend to have more bronchitis, pneumonia, respiratory infections, ear infections, and asthma symptoms. The frequency of infection is directly related to the amount of smoke in the home.

Recommendation: Please don't smoke or let others smoke near your kids, especially in your home or care. If you do smoke, go outside.

For More Information call the Indoor Air Quality Information Clearinghouse at (800) 438-4318

Ultraviolet (UV) Rays

Overexposure to the sun's harmful UV light may damage children's skin, cause eye damage, and suppress the immune system. UV light is the sun's radiation which has increased on the earth's surface due to damage to the earth's ozone layer in the upper atmosphere. Children 10-15 years of age who have experienced excessive sun-burns are three times as likely to develop malignant melanoma, the most deadly kind of skin cancer later in life. **Recommendation:** Keep children out of the mid-day sun; always use sunscreen (with a sun protection factor (SPF) of at least 15); and wear light clothing, hats, and sunglasses.

For More Information Call the Stratospheric Ozone Hotline: (800) 296-1996

Clear Your Home Of Asthma Triggers

Asthma is a chronic respiratory disease, a narrowing of the airways in the lung. Symptoms include coughing, wheezing, chest tightness, shortness of breath, and increased risk of respiratory infections. Asthma attacks are commonly "triggered" by irritants and allergens such as cigarette smoke, wood smoke, smog, pollen, household dust mites, pet dander, cockroaches and molds. About 75 to 80 percent of children with asthma have significant allergies to these environmental triggers. Asthma is the leading cause of long-term illness in children. **Recommendation:** Do not allow smoking in your home. Keep your home as free of these asthma triggers as possible. For More Information call the Indoor Air Quality Information Clearinghouse At (800) 438-4318



Environmental/Health Contacts:

EPA Region 8: PH (800) 227-8917, US EPA Children's Health Hotline: (877) 590-KIDS

Colorado: Dept. of Public Health and Environment Information Center at (303) 692-2035 for Metro residents and (800) 886-7689, ext. 2035 for Colorado residents outside the metro area. For pesticides, call the Dept. of Agriculture (303) 239-4139.

Montana: For indoor air quality (asbestos, radon, secondhand smoke), lead and water, call the Dept. of Environmental Quality at (406) 444-2544. For pesticides, lead and water, call the Dept. of Public Health and Human services, Environmental Lab Bureau at (406) 444-2642. For pesticides, call the Dept. of Agriculture at (406) 444-3144.

North Dakota: Call the Dept. of Health at (701) 328-5150.

South Dakota: For asbestos, radon, pesticides, water and disposal of products containing lead, call the Dept. of Environment and Natural Resources at (605) 773-5559. For secondhand smoke, lead, ultraviolet light and water, call the Dept. of Health, Children's Special Health Services at (605) 773-3737.

Utah: For asbestos, radon, lead and water, call the Dept. of Environmental Quality at (801) 536-4400. For secondhand smoke, ultraviolet light, and lead, call the Dept. of Health at (801) 538-6101. For pesticides, call the Dept. of Agriculture at (801) 538-7105.

Wyoming: For lead, asbestos and water, call the Dept. of Environmental Quality at (307) 777-7938. For radon, second-hand smoke and lead, call the Dept. of Health at (307) 777-7656. For pesticides, call Dept. of Agriculture at (307) 777-7321.

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Region 8 Children's Health Program

Kids Grow Best In Healthy Environments

Because young bodies and minds are still developing, children are much more susceptible than grownups to pollution. Pollutants at home, school, and play areas can harm children. This brochure points out some common environmental health threats and provides parents, health and day-care providers and school personnel with tips for protecting children.

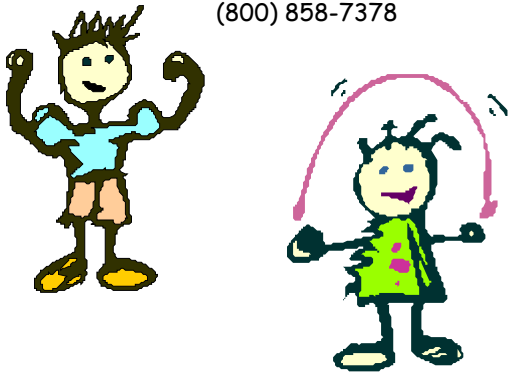


Pesticides/Toxic Chemicals

Pesticides are substances intended to destroy, control or repel pests, such as insects, weeds, fungi, rodents, and bacteria. Depending upon the dose, pesticides may cause a range of harm such as cancer, acute or chronic injury to the lungs, nervous, reproductive, endocrine and immune system damage and may accumulate in the environment. Children are at greater risk of pesticide exposure than adults because pound for pound of body weight, children not only eat more and breathe more, but they also have a more rapid metabolism than adults and they play on the floor and lawn where pesticides are commonly applied.

Recommendation: Never use powerful agricultural products in or around your home. Don't use pesticides if you don't have to. If you must use pesticides, always follow label directions. Remove garbage and food crumbs that attract pests. Wash fruits and vegetables thoroughly under running water before eating, and keep children, toys and pets away from areas where pesticides have been used. For More Information Contact the National Pesticide Telecommunications

Network Hotline at
(800) 858-7378



Kids Run Better Un-Leaded

Lead is a major environmental health hazard for young children. About 75 percent of US homes built before 1978 contain some lead paint, the principal source of lead exposure today. Children living in older homes are threatened by chipping or peeling lead paint, and by lead-contaminated dust from paint removal during remodeling. Kids may be exposed to lead through drinking water tainted by lead plumbing. Lead exposure can cause a variety of health problems including blood and kidney disorders. In the fetus and in young children, elevated lead may damage the brain. **Recommendation:** Have your home tested for lead. Wash walls and window sills to protect kids from dust and peeling paint contaminated with lead (esp. in older homes). Find out if you have lead pipes or lead solder. Check with your water supplier to find out if your water is corrosive (which makes lead a bigger problem). IF lead is a problem in your area, run the cold water for 30 seconds to flush lead pipes. **Eat Right** - kids who get proper levels of iron and calcium in their diet will absorb less lead. If you have reason to believe that you have lead in your home, see your doctor to get your children tested for lead.

For More Information Contact the National Lead Information Center Hotline at (800) 424-LEAD



Radon Gas In Indoor Air

Radon gas is a naturally occurring radionuclide formed in the soil throughout the world. It is odorless, tasteless, and colorless. Breathing air containing radon carries the risk of developing lung cancer. The amount of risk depends on the radon concentration in the air and total time of exposure (years). Next to smoking, radon is the leading cause of lung cancer deaths each year. EPA recommends an indoor air concentration of radon less than 4 picoCuries per Liter (pCi/L) of air. EPA also estimates about 10 percent of homes in the U.S. have indoor air concentrations of radon above 4 pCi/L. **Recommendation:** Test the air in your home for radon gas. If the test shows a concentration greater than 4 pCi/L, take action to install a radon reduction system. For sources of radon test kits, call your state radon contact. For More Information Contact the Indoor Air Quality/Radon Information Line at (800) 55-RADON

Asbestos Causes Cancer

Asbestos is a fibrous mineral that was used to strengthen a variety of products, provide heat insulation and fire resistance. It was widely used in construction materials, such as shingles for roofing and siding, pipe and boiler insulation, floor tiles, ceiling panels, coating, and gaskets. It is present in schools and other public buildings as well as in some houses. Tiny asbestos fibers can easily penetrate tissues if inhaled or swallowed and can remain in the body for many years. **Recommendation:** Leave any suspect material undisturbed - if material appears damaged, have it sampled and evaluated by a certified professional.

For More Information call (800) 462-6706 or (800) 368-5888

Water Water Everywhere

Children's exposure to waterborne contaminants can occur from drinking water, eating contaminated fish, or swallowing water while swimming in contaminated lakes, oceans or streams.

Drinking water: Nitrates are a result of the use of chemical fertilizers which then leach into the water. Consuming small amounts of nitrate is not harmful, but larger amounts are toxic to infants and cause oxygen depletion in the body. **Fish consumption:** Pollutants, such as mercury that accumulates in the tissues of fish, are of great concern because of the potential to cause birth defects, liver damage, cancer and other serious health problems. **Recreation:** Disease-causing organisms in sewage-contaminated water can cause hepatitis, dysentery, fever, gastrointestinal illness, ear infections, and other health problems. **Recommendation:**

Drinking Water: If you suspect your drinking water has questionable nitrate concentrations, contact your local water supplier and ask for the test results or have your private well tested. **Fish Consumption:** Because the developing fetus may be the most sensitive to the effects of mercury, women of child-bearing age should limit their consumption of marine and fresh water fish taken from contaminated waters. **Recreation:** Don't allow your child to swim near areas of questionable water quality. For More Information call the Safe Drinking Water Hotline at (800) 426-4791